

I am writing to provide comments to the FCC on the E-Rate NPRM, proceeding 13-184. E-Rate has been very important to Cullman County Schools because it has helped our students and teachers gain access to a wealth of online resources, communicate and collaborate, and develop the 21st century skills necessary for college and career. However, E-Rate funding levels have not kept pace with my Cullman County Schools ever increasing bandwidth needs. I urge you to raise the E-Rate funding level to at least \$5 billion per year, which is close to the average demand level for each of the past two years.

As the Technology Director for Cullman County Schools, a rural district in Alabama with about 10,000 students, I know that seamlessly infusing digital learning throughout the curriculum is a prerequisite for students to graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in today's global economy. Access to high-speed broadband is the key to allowing modern teaching and learning to occur in all schools across the country.

In Cullman County our teachers use digital learning to personalize learning, provide online classes, meet Common Core State Standards, administer online assessments, make data-driven decisions, etc. The use of these resources requiring high speed, reliable Internet access is increasing at a greater rate than current funding provides for, and is expected to continue to increase in the future.

The E-Rate program has been a phenomenal success in bringing internet access to almost every classroom in America. In the last funding cycle, applications from schools and libraries requested a total of more than \$5 billion—twice the amount of available funding. I respectfully urge the FCC to increase funding for the E-Rate program to at least \$5 billion to meet this demand. All students need access to high-speed broadband. Our nation's future depends on their success.